

“What makes a good seminar?”

Briefing Notes

1. **Identify any resources you require.** Make sure you will have everything available that you need and have a contingency plan.
2. **Know what you are aiming to do.** Seek to define what your key objective is and be able to state this in a single sentence. Nobody should leave saying “what was that all about?”
3. **Sift your material according to your key purpose.** This helps determine what you will include and more importantly what you will exclude. Identify the areas you intend to cover. A major danger is seeking to include too much material.
4. **Important ideas go first.** Interest levels peak early in a session.
5. **Welcome people.** Briefly introduce yourself and ask people to introduce themselves. Consider asking participants what they are hoping to discover in the seminar. Briefly describe the outline of the seminar and move quickly on.
6. **Create a safe space from the beginning.** This is vital if ideas are to be openly explored and questions asked. Indicate there is much we can learn from each other. Consider asking, “Have you ever felt like this or asked yourself?”
7. **Welcome involvement and participation.** A seminar is not a monologue and should include a high level of interaction. Good questions stimulate conversation. You may include some small groups -. 3 or 4 people are ideal. Allocate time for questions.
8. **Include the quiet person.** Suggest when someone is in danger of monopolising the conversation that we should give the opportunity for someone else to contribute.
9. **Keep to time** You need to consider how long you will allocate to each section. Be prepared to cut some material if necessary.
10. Consider giving a handout at the end of the seminar. This could include relevant books.